

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the Office Action dated October 7, 2009, claims 1, 3-10, 12-13, 15, 17-20, 23-26 are presented for examination, of which claims 1, 6, 10, 13, 20, 23 and 26 are independent. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 2, 7, 11, 14, 15, 18, 21, and 27 are objected as being dependent upon a rejected basic claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, subject to the results of a final search by Examiner. Independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of cancelled dependent claim 2. Therefore, independent claim 1 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Similarly, the independent claims 6, 10, 13, 20, and 26 have been amended to incorporate the limitations of the respective dependent claims containing allowable subject matter. Therefore independent claims 6, 10, 13, 20 and 26 are believed to be in condition for allowance. Independent claim 23 is similar to apparatus claim 13 and was amended to incorporate the limitations of cancelled claim 14. Independent claim 23 is therefore believed to be in condition for allowance. The remaining claims each depend from one of the aforementioned claims and are therefore believed to also be in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102

Claims 1, 3-6, 8-10, 12, 13, 17, 19, 20, and 23-26 are rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Trottier, et al. (US 6,763,176). The amendments to the claims as discussed above overcome the rejections. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

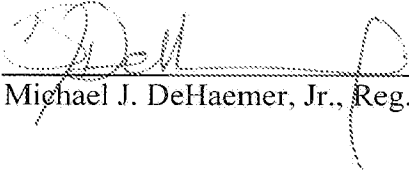
In light of the amendments contained herein, Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance, for which early action is requested.

Please charge any fees or overpayments that may be due with this response to Deposit Account No. 17-0026.

Respectfully submitted,

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